



State of Connecticut
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
STATE CAPITOL
HARTFORD, CONNECTICUT 06106-1591

REPRESENTATIVE TONI E. WALKER
93rd ASSEMBLY DISTRICT

LEGISLATIVE OFFICE BUILDING ROOM 2700
HARTFORD, CT 06106-1591

CAPITOL: 860-240-8585
TOLL FREE: 800-842-8267
FAX: 860-240-0027
E-MAIL: Toni.Walker@cga.ct.gov

CHAIRMAN
APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE

MEMBER
HIGHER EDUCATION AND EMPLOYMENT
ADVANCEMENT COMMITTEE
JUDICIARY COMMITTEE

Thursday, March 03, 2016

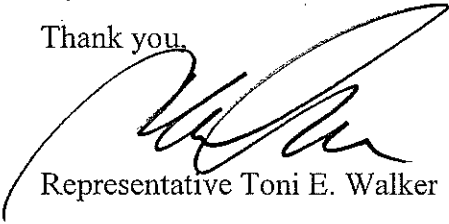
Good Afternoon Senator Flexer, Representative Serra, Senator Kelly, Representative Bolinsky and distinguished members of the Aging Committee. I am testifying before you today in support of Raised Bill 241, an Act that would provide necessary access to quality produce for senior citizens in the state.

According to a 2014 AARP report, Social Security is the only source of income for over a quarter of Connecticut's seniors. The average Social Security benefit for these seniors is \$1,372 per month. According to Bloomberg, Connecticut also has one of the highest percentage of seniors working. Approximately 15.5% of female seniors, and 23.2% of male seniors are working. This ranks the state 10th and 15th, respectively, for the highest percentage of seniors employed. As this population ages unexpected expenses often emerge as health problems are revealed and their income dries up, so it becomes increasingly important that they have access to fresh, GMO-free produce. If they are still working it's essential that they maintain their health, and if they are living on a fixed income it's imperative that the access to Farmers Market produce be affordable. The \$25 minimum voucher value established by this bill, which would

replace Subsection (a) of section 22-6q of the general statutes, will provide precisely that access that seniors require.

Our State has one of the oldest populations in the country, and this is just another way we can act to ensure they are protected. These are individuals who have worked a lifetime, and shouldn't have to sacrifice their quality of life because of financial limitations.

Thank you.



Representative Toni E. Walker